

# THE ROSS SETTLEMENT PROJECT

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*Improving NGRI treatment services at state psychiatric hospitals*

## **Background**

The Ross Settlement Project is a result of a lawsuit filed May 7, 2014 entitled *Ketema Ross, et al vs. Jay Inslee et al.* in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington. Discussions regarding the option to settle the lawsuit began in November 2014, the settlement was signed by all parties in late July, 2016, and a court order was issued on August 26, 2016. Project goals, commitments and exit criteria were negotiated and agreed upon by plaintiff and defense counsel.

## **Project Description**

The purpose of the Ross Settlement Project is to improve the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) “not guilty by reason of insanity” (NGRI) treatment services through: 1) ensuring the final release process required by chapter 10.77 RCW is pursued when clinically indicated; and 2) improving policies at Eastern State Hospital (ESH) and Western State Hospital (WSH) to promote clinically based decision making. The primary purpose of this project is to meet settlement requirements. The Ross v. Inslee Project will be managed through the Behavioral Health Administration’s (BHA) Office of Forensic and Mental Health Services (OFMHS), in collaboration with Eastern State Hospital (ESH) and Western State Hospital (WSH) executive and subject matter expert staff.

## **Project Resources**

Additional funding and resources were not made available to DSHS through the settlement negotiations. Therefore, project requirements must be met within the current constraints of staff and resources of DSHS’s Office of Mental Health Services (OFMHS) within the Behavioral Health Administration, ESH and WSH.

## **Approach**

As required by the settlement, the project will be advised through a Planning Implementation Committee (PIC) comprised of (at a minimum) the OFMHS Director, the WSH Center for Forensic Services Director, and the ESH Forensic Services Administrator. There are three phases of the project: 1) policy assessment; 2) policy writing, review and finalization; and 3) policy implementation.

## **Project Outcomes**

The primary outcomes expected at the project’s termination include: 1) new and or upgraded policies related to the NGRI treatment services outlined in the settlement at both hospital sites; and 2) “full implementation” of updated policies which includes site specific training plans, implementation schedules and full execution of all policies for a six months period. When these outcomes are achieved, the case will be considered for dismissal.

## **Timeline**

The project began on August 1, 2016 and is estimated to be completed by November 30, 2017.